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Amendment
Attorney Docket No.: S63.2-9397

In the Claims:

✓
Please cancel claims 22 and 25 without prejudice or disclaimer.

✓
Please replace claims 26, 28 and 34 with the following amended claims:

26. (Amended) A stent in a non-expanded state, comprising:

a first expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut positioned adjacent to a second expansion strut and a joining strut of the first expansion strut pair that couples the first and second expansion struts at a distal end of the first expansion strut pair, the first and second expansion struts joined at the distal end only, a plurality of the first expansion strut pair forming a first expansion column, adjacent first expansion strut pairs connected at a proximal end;

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a second expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut positioned adjacent to a second expansion strut and a joining strut of the second expansion strut pair that couples the first and second expansion struts of the second expansion strut pair at a proximal end of the second expansion strut pair, the first and second expansion struts joined at the proximal end only, a plurality of the second expansion strut pair forming a second expansion column, adjacent second expansion strut pairs connected at a distal end;

a first connecting strut including a first connecting strut proximal head section and a first connecting strut distal tail section, the head section being coupled to the distal end of the first expansion strut pair in the first expansion column and the tail section being coupled to the proximal end of the second expansion strut pair of the second expansion column, a plurality of the first connecting strut forming a first connecting strut column that couples the first expansion column to the second expansion column;

a third expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut positioned adjacent to a second expansion strut and a third joining strut of the third expansion strut pair that couples the first and second expansion struts at a proximal end of the third expansion strut pair, the first and second expansion struts joined at the proximal end only, a plurality of the second expansion strut pair forming a third expansion column, adjacent third expansion strut pairs connected at a distal end;

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a plurality of the third expansion strut pair forming a third expansion column, the first expansion strut of the first expansion strut pair in the first expansion column having a longitudinal axis that is parallel to and offset from a longitudinal axis of the first expansion strut of the second expansion strut pair in the second expansion column, and the second expansion strut of the third expansion strut pair in the third expansion column has a longitudinal axis that is parallel to and offset from a longitudinal axis of first expansion strut of the second expansion strut pair of the second expansion column, a plurality of the third expansion strut pair forming a third expansion column,

a second connecting strut including a proximal head section and a distal tail section, the head section being coupled to the distal end of the second expansion strut pair in the second expansion column and the tail section being coupled to the proximal end of the third expansion strut pair of the third expansion column, a plurality of the second connecting strut forming a second connecting strut column that couples the second expansion column to the third expansion column, and

wherein a ratio of a number of expansion struts to a number of connecting struts is selected to provide a sufficient stent flexibility to permit introduction of the stent through a selected blood vessel.

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28 (Amended) The stent of claim 26, wherein a width of a portion of the second expansion struts is the same as a width of a portion of the first expansion struts.

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34 (Amended) A stent in a non-expanded state, comprising:

a first expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut positioned adjacent to a second expansion strut and a joining strut of the first expansion strut pair that couples the first and second expansion struts at a distal end of the first expansion strut pair, the first and second expansion struts joined at the distal end only, a plurality of the first expansion strut pair forming a first expansion column, adjacent first expansion strut pairs connected at a proximal end;

a second expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut positioned adjacent to a second expansion strut and a joining strut of the second expansion strut pair that couples the first and second expansion struts of the second expansion strut pair at a proximal end of the second expansion strut pair, the first and second expansion struts joined at the proximal end only, a plurality of the second expansion strut pair forming a second expansion column, adjacent second